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INFO EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 04 ATHENS 001685

SIPDIS  
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AMEMBASSY ANKARA PASS TO AMCONSUL ADANA  
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TAGS: PGOV PREL PHUM PREF PTER SMIG KCRM GR

SUBJECT: Greece: New Government Tackles Migration and Asylum Issues

REF: A) ATHENS 315; B) ATHENS 1349; C) ATHENS 1641; D) ATHENS 2038

CLASSIFIED BY: Daniel V. Speckhard, Ambassador; REASON: 1.4(B), (D)

1. (C) SUMMARY: Greece's new PASOK-led government has placed migration and asylum policy reform high on its agenda, announcing new measures to

Migration: A Key Geopolitical and Social Challenge -----

2. (SBU) Greece has become the EU entry point of choice for illegal migrants and refugees, many of whom seek residence in Western Europe and s

3. (C) While nearly half of all illegal migrants come from neighboring Albania, the more visible surge in immigrants from conflict zones in th  
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4. (S) The large number of migrants entering Greece also poses risks. As an example, in July, Greek authorities deported Iraqi citizen Mu'amma

Greece to Reform Much-Criticized Asylum Policies -----

5. (SBU) For the last several years, international organizations and regional and domestic NGOs have roundly criticized Greece for its treatme

6. (SBU) Greece's new PASOK government has committed to addressing many of these concerns, and has moved quickly to revamp asylum processes &

New Migration Policies and "Europeanizing" Enforcement -----

7. (C) The government's dire fiscal straits may politically

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hamstringing the government's broader agenda to reshape enforcement and asylum policy, so officials have proposed additional specific migration re

8. (C) Because of these domestic shortfalls in migration enforcement, the Greeks have also focused on "Europeanizing" the issue, using a three

9. (C) The Greeks have been successful at gaining the attention of EU leaders. In July, EU Justice Commissioner Jacques Barrot noted that unc

COMMENT: Not Just a Greek Issue, but a European One -----

10. (C) As the migration doorway into Europe, Greece shoulders a disproportionate burden of illegal immigrants and asylum seekers. However, th  
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Asia, and Africa, are applicable to all European nations. Migration is a key crosscutting political, national security, human rights, and socie